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DELIVERED TO THE

CLERGY OF THE DIOCESE OF CHESTER,

AT THE

VISITATION

IN

JUNE AND SEPTEMBER, MDCCCXLI.

BY

JOHN BIRD SUMNER, D.D.

LORD BISHOP OF CHESTER.

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TO

THE CLERGY OF THE DIOCESE OF CHESTER,

This Charge,

PUBLISHED AT THEIR REQUEST,

IS INSCRIBED WITH SINCERE AFFECTION AND RESPECT,

BY THEIR FAITHFUL FRIEND AND BROTHER,

J. B. CHESTER.

A C H A R G E.

MY REVEREND BRETHREN,

The course of years has glided quickly on, and I am again permitted to come officially amongst you, as the witness of your exertions, the encourager of your labours, and your adviser under difficulties. Many whom I see around me, I now meet for the fifth time; whilst others, who once filled up our numbers and adorned our company, have been called to their great account. I feel convinced, that in the nearer prospect of this change, they did not repent of their works of faith or labours of love. Their zeal did not seem to have been too ardent, their devotedness too complete, their labours too unsparing. May God give us all grace to remember that we remain still entrusted with a stewardship, which

in their case has been brought to a close ; and that “ it is required of stewards that they be found faithful.”

The years to which we look back as having been united together in the duties of the ministry, have been eventful years : not marked indeed with such outward changes in the general history of nations, as many of those which preceded ; but distinguished by domestic occurrences more important to the Church, more affecting its various interests. Some of these were thought even to endanger her constitution as a national establishment : and on the one side there have been fears, and on the other hopes, that the time was approaching when her vantage ground might be cut away, and her outward and earthly bulwarks overthrown. By God’s blessing, the fears and the hopes have been alike dissipated : the clouds which lowered over our ecclesiastical prospects are fast passing away : but as they were not sent without a reason, so ought they not to vanish without effect : they have indicated to us, by tokens which it is impossible to mistake, on what alone the security of the church, as a national establishment, must depend. It must depend upon its practical effi-

ciency: upon the experience of its usefulness. Being ordained of God for the eternal welfare of the people, it must fulfil the purpose of its appointment. As the people advance in knowledge, and the collision of many minds sharpens intellectual acuteness, the ministers of the Church must advance together with their flock, and maintain the lead. As the country grows in population, the Church must also widen the shelter of her tents, and extend the exercise of her ministrations, till they be commensurate with the charge entrusted to her. There might be complaint, and just complaint, of hardship, when, with means diminishing rather than increasing, fresh and unlimited services are expected from us. Our case may be compared to that of the Israelites in Egypt, and the public expectations deemed no more reasonable than the demands of Pharaoh's taskmasters. And we may safely urge this plea in reply to unjust accusations, or in extenuation of unavoidable failure. But it must not be used to relax our energies. The Church will limit her services by no bounds, except the bounds of the powers assigned her. She will meet fresh demands upon her strength, by prayer that increasing strength may be sup-

plied. And going forth in the name of the Lord, she will trust in his blessing for means to fulfil the purposes intended by his sovereign will.

Our own diocese, Reverend Brethren, may well be cited to encourage our hopes, if encouragement were needed—to disperse our doubts, if doubts were entertained. It did present, some years ago, a specimen of religious destitution, which might well be deemed in every point of view appalling. And there are districts, large and populous districts, still remaining, where “darkness still covers the land, and gross darkness the people.” But then there are other portions of it where the picture is so different, and the prospect so greatly brightened, as to justify a sanguine belief that God has still mercy in store for us, and designs that our Church shall remain an acknowledged blessing to our land; even to those sections of it which had seemed through circumstances to be farthest removed from its reach and influence.

Since our first meeting, now twelve years since, the measures which had been already commenced for increasing the efficiency of the

Church have come into fuller operation, and spread in new directions. The exertions used to provide for the wants of an overgrown and daily-increasing population, have prospered beyond our hopes. One hundred and seventy additional churches have opened their doors to receive a people, of whom the greater part were before practically excluded from the benefits of the Establishment.* And it is not less satisfactory to know, that God had so prepared the soil, that the harvest seems to follow close upon the sowing of the seed. Numerous are the places, where, a few years ago hundreds, if not thousands, of families were congregated without any regular provision for their spiritual culture. The visitor of these districts now, will not only find the house set apart for the worship of God ; but the minister, whose charge it is, permanently settled in his parsonage ; the children collected in schools ; the people systematically instructed ; the general aspect of a christian community, where recently all was barren.

In other places, if there is not yet a church, there is the threshold of a church ; for so, in a double sense, I may term those licensed buildings

* See Appendix, No. I. p. 45.

which are alike preparing the way for churches, and serving as substitutes for them ; and in which thousands of the poorer classes are receiving instruction which they could not obtain elsewhere, at the hands of curates supported partly by private liberality, but chiefly by the two invaluable Societies which have relieved our most urgent wants, by supplying the salary of curates. Through these united aids, the Church has gained a vast accession of strength in those districts where her weakness had been previously most apparent, and where the existing clergy were hopelessly struggling against a mountain of impossibilities, in the vain attempt to fulfil the task assigned them.

Another important mean of usefulness and influence has advanced with corresponding success ; the department of Education. Through the indefatigable exertions which have established the Diocesan Board for this object, we have returns approaching accuracy from every division of the diocese. It would be tedious to enter here into the details. But the exertion which has been used to provide the machinery of education for our increasing numbers, may

be estimated from the fact, that during the last ten years, within the parish of Whalley alone, forty-three school-rooms have been erected, at an expense of £13,000. We should fall below the truth, if, looking through the whole extent of the diocese, we calculated the exertions made for this same object as less than half of this noble and pre-eminent example. And the result would be about three hundred and fifty additional schools, offering provision for the education of the people for many generations, and only requiring a readiness on their part to profit by the opportunities afforded them.

It is no less important that, through the successful institution of the training school at Chester, the character of the popular education bids fair to be greatly raised; to reach, indeed, as high a standard as the practice (I fear that I must say the increasing practice) of early labour, will permit us to attain.

Here, however, I must take the opportunity of expressing my conviction, that no machinery we can devise will suffice to inculcate religious truths, in their practical bearing, upon the young, unless the Clergy take that department of instruction into their own hands. There is every rea-

son why they should. We have earnestly contended for the principle, that National Education should be confided to the Church. Having established the principle, let us by all means maintain the practice, and not leave to any master, however well instructed, that duty which our Lord committed with such affecting solemnity to one of his chief Apostles: "Simon, lovest thou me? Feed my lambs." You will find, my Reverend Brethren, that diligence in this duty will repay you in many ways, besides the improvement of your scholars. The habit of familiarly explaining Scripture to the young, and bringing it down to the level of their understandings, will greatly assist the fulfilment of the same duty to those "children of larger growth" with whom you have to do. It will promote readiness of illustration; it will secure that simplicity of thought and language, which is indispensable to success in all religious teaching.

The effect is already evident of the various measures to which I have alluded. It is perceived in a growing attachment to the Church, in an acknowledgment of its excellence, in a practical sense of the value of its services. The number

of attendants at public worship, the number of communicants, the number of candidates for Confirmation, have increased far beyond the growth of our population. In some of our most extensive parishes, and especially in the two great towns of the diocese, the communicants have nearly doubled since the first account which I received of them : the candidates for Confirmation are trebled : and thus the clergy have the reward of knowing that the labour, the anxiety, the personal sacrifices which have procured an increase of the means of grace, have not been employed in vain. Proofs, moreover, are thus given, that opposition, or indifference towards the Establishment, or even separation from it, has not generally arisen from any distrust of its discipline or doctrines, but from the difficulty, or practical impossibility, of obtaining instruction within its pale.

Those obstacles were so long suffered to exist, that the effects cannot be suddenly removed. Interests and prejudices have had time to take deep root, and to ramify widely ; and we must be strangers to human nature if we suppose that these will not be like the swell which disturbs the sea long after the storm which raised it has

subsided, and sway the judgment and influence the conduct, though the cause has ceased, to which they chiefly owe their origin. Perhaps it is too much to expect what, nevertheless, we earnestly desire, that there should be no schisms or divisions among Christians: that the Church of Christ should ever be a seamless coat; that all the congregations of faithful men should ever be so strictly one, as to think alike, and agree unanimously upon all subjects: upon such subjects, for instance, as diocesan episcopacy, or infant baptism, or liturgical forms, or church membership, or a national establishment. There may be always some minds, which, on questions such as these, may differ from the conclusions which we believe to be justly deduced from Scripture. I have no wish, in saying this, to encourage or excuse divisions. To separate from the brethren, and oppose the general practice of the Church, is to incur a heavy responsibility. But I judge from facts, and experience, and human nature. And the comfort and peace of the Christian world would be greatly increased, if it were commonly understood that the unity which the Scriptures demand, were the unity of those who hold alike the great doctrines of christian truth,

but consent to differ on matters concerning which Scripture does not carry determinate conviction to every honest mind.

But, however this may be, the principles of our national Church, on all such disputable subjects, are established on such firm grounds, that those who abandon her will be the few, and not the many, as long as she is true to herself, and faithful to her charge. Men will feel towards her, as they feel towards their native country, which some impatient or adventurous spirits leave, whatever advantages they may forego; but to which the mass of the community will adhere, unless it ceases to afford them shelter and subsistence. So with our Established Church: based as it is upon antiquity, accredited by authority, and sanctioned by the judgment of the wisest and greatest names;—few will abandon it, if its benefits are within their reach, and it is really able to offer instruction to the people in the substantive shape of an effective minister, and an accessible place of worship. Her plain and scriptural Articles; her spiritual and comprehensive Liturgy; her agreement with the earliest examples of christian discipleship; united with the advantages which she possesses,

justly possesses, as the Church of the nation, the Church of our forefathers : these grounds of preference will continue, as they ought, to influence in her favour the great majority of the minds of our population. They are grounds of preference which can only be counterbalanced by the individual consideration—"This Church is not available to me. Granted, that it is the best and purest channel of Divine truth; but no truth can flow to me through that channel. Its form of worship approves itself to my understanding; but I have no means of joining in it. Its ministers are in direct succession from those whom Christ Himself commissioned. But I am out of the reach of their instruction." When these considerations exist, they must come with overpowering force to persons once awakened to a concern for their salvation; with a force which no reasoner can effectually resist, who takes his stand on Scripture, or argues with those who have Scripture in their hands. If a man feels that he has been personally benefited by the instructions of a dissenting teacher, being the only instructions within his reach, no argument can persuade him that he ought never to have listened to them. Yet the evils of division are many

and serious. The mode, then, of preventing them, must be to remove the chief cause from which they spring ; not to deny the means of satisfying their thirst to those who are eager for religious knowledge ; but to open fresh fountains, and widen the channel, that all, who will, may “ take of the water of life freely.” No further attraction will be needed, than the purity and sufficiency of the stream. We may safely draw this conclusion, from experience of what has been already done.

But, thankful as I am for the encouragements which we enjoy, I should deceive both myself and you, if I spoke of our difficulties as overcome, or thought the time arrived when our exertions could be relaxed. There is an intimation of what may be hoped for, and ultimately achieved ; but we are only girding on our harness, and must not boast ourselves as those that are putting it off, and have obtained the victory. There is proof that the doctrines of the Gospel, when diligently inculcated in the spirit of those Articles which our Church maintains, will not be proclaimed in vain ; will enlist many hearts on their side, and on the side of those who

preach them. But there is no proof, and there never can be proof, that the same effect can be produced without these means, or by any other means. A harvest will reward the diligent, but not the careless sower ; the sower of good seed, and not of blighted seed. The truth, as it is in Jesus, must be preserved in its purity and simplicity, or we shall look in vain for the fruits which we desire to see, and which the present state of things requires ; attachment to the teacher, attachment to the Church to which he belongs, generosity and active zeal in the cause of God and man, of which he is the advocate.

And here it is impossible not to remark upon the subtle wiles of that Adversary, against whom the Church of Christ is set up, and whose power it is destined to overthrow. His activity is in exact proportion to the activity which is used against him. His vigilance never fails to seize the opportunities which the weakness of man too frequently supplies. No sooner is good seed sown in the field, than tares are found springing up amidst the wheat. Such has been the case throughout the whole history of the Church : and it has been signally and unexpectedly exem-

plified in the present day by the favour shown to notions which might seem inconsistent with the advancement of reason, by the revival of errors which might have been supposed to be buried for ever.

To enter upon this subject generally or fully, would be quite incompatible with the limits of a Charge;* and to treat it cursorily, would not be respectful to my brethren. I shall confine myself to a brief review of two points, in which the interests committed to us are especially concerned.†

1. The principle by which, in all ages and countries, the power of Satan has been most successfully assailed, and the human heart most strongly actuated, is that of simple reliance on Christ Jesus: simple acceptance of the truth,

* I must add, that it would be altogether superfluous. The divinity of the Oxford Tracts has been as completely refuted in all its parts, as any erroneous opinions can ever be refuted; and it is a sign of the discretion, if not of the candour of the writers, to treat these answers generally as if they had never been written. If this continues to be the case, after the recent publication of Mr. Goode's elaborate "Rule of Faith and Practice," it must be considered as a tacit acknowledgment of complete refutation.

† See Appendix, No.II.

that He is “made unto us of God, wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.” Accordingly, this doctrine, that, lying under God’s wrath and condemnation, we are justified by faith in Jesus Christ: this plain and simple truth has uniformly been assailed by every instrument which the enemy could bring to bear against it. From the time when certain men went down from Jerusalem and troubled the Church at Antioch;* from the time when Paul had to grieve over the disciples in Galatia, that they were “removed from the grace of Christ into another gospel;† which was not another,” for it was no gospel at all; from the earliest days until now, this has been the point of attack, because on this all depends. We are still experiencing the same, and from the same cause.

Through the merciful providence of God, the true principles of the Gospel were prevailing through the length and breadth of the land, and effects were following, which they alone are capable of producing. Meanwhile the enemy is on the watch; knows well where his danger lies; and contrives to cast reproach upon the doctrine which is the hinge of christian truth

* See Acts xv. 1—25.

† Gal. i. 6.

and christian practice ; to confound things which ought to be kept distinct ; things inherent in man with things extraneous to man ; individual duties with vicarious merits ; and so to reduce religion to that doubt and uncertainty which never has led, and never will lead, to a consistent course of action.

It is notorious that this attempt, frequently made, and too often successful, has been renewed in the present day. The Author of our salvation, “not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance and the knowledge of the truth,” has commanded that the Gospel should be preached to every creature. Those have now risen up who affirm that the doctrine of the Gospel, the propitiation made for sin, is a doctrine too dangerous to be openly disclosed, too mysterious to be generally exhibited ; and would thus deprive the sinner at once of his motive to repent, and his comfort in repenting. It has been another part of the same system to involve the article of our justification in obscurity ; what has been done for us, and what is to be wrought in us, are confused together ; and, practically, man is induced to look to himself,

and not to his Redeemer, for acceptance with God.

In all this, there is nothing that was unforeseen. The Apostle has plainly warned us to "beware of philosophy and vain deceit," lest they turn us aside from the simplicity of the Gospel: that very simplicity which fits it for the reception and benefit of all, but of which some men profess to be afraid, lest mercy should be too free, and the way of return to God too open. It is, in truth, the offence of the cross renewed under a fresh disguise: the objection which corrupt nature has always opposed under various forms to the apostolical doctrine, "By grace are ye saved, through faith: not of works, lest any man should boast."

The scriptural truth is as clear as it is simple. "When all were dead, Christ died for all;" so that "he that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son, hath not life." By one way alone can man possess the Son; that is, by believing in him. And therefore, faith alone can justify; faith alone can appropriate to us

that remedy, which God has appointed for the healing of our plague : faith alone can give us an interest in that sacrifice, which God has accepted as the satisfaction for sin. Thus, “ being justified by faith, we have peace with God through Jesus Christ.”

It is true, that, being thus accepted with God, and endued with his Spirit, man becomes a new creature. But he is not accepted with God, because he is a new creature, but because Christ has made atonement for the wrath which in his old nature he had incurred. His faith in that atonement which led to his acceptance, leads also to his doing works meet for one who is accepted : but the works which follow his being justified, and are its effect, can never also be the cause of his justification. If a remedy were proposed to a man lying under a mortal disease, and by applying it he were restored to life ; it would be sophistry to affirm, that, after all, it was not the remedy which saved, but that the constitution, strengthened by the remedy, resisted the disease. It would be injustice to the remedy, and ingratitude to the physician. And so it is injustice and ingratitude to depreciate the virtue of Christ’s propitiation, by mix-

ing up with it the righteousness of his redeemed people. Let no misrepresentation pervert, let no false philosophy corrupt the wholesome truth, that man is “delivered from the wrath to come,” “not by works of righteousness which he has done,” or may do, but by Him alone who “died for our sins, and rose again for our justification.” The statement which came fresh from the Reformers’ age, is the statement to which we must still recur. “There is a righteousness which is inherent, and a righteousness which is not inherent. The righteousness whereby we are sanctified, is inherent, but not perfect. The righteousness whereby we are justified, is perfect, but not inherent.”* This is the fundamental and characteristic article of all the Reformed Churches : laid as it were their corner-stone ; that we are accounted righteous before God through the merits of Christ alone, and not “for our own works or deservings :” that a lively faith is known by its works, as a sound tree by its fruits : but that they do not bear the root, but the root them. And we are at no loss for the reason why the Reformers were so diligent in laying this foundation. They had seen the consequence

* Hooker, Sermon on Habakkuk i. 4. S. 3.

of departing from it. If works are to contribute to justification, "then grace is no more grace." If man can assist in expiating his own sin, he is not the corrupt being which needs redemption. And such was, in fact, the process through which human error superseded scriptural truth. Our Reformers knew how the corruption of man had been first lost sight of, and then the atonement made for it virtually neglected: they knew how the satisfaction of Christ had been set aside, and human works substituted in its stead, often such works as were neither acceptable to God, nor profitable to man; till at length a system overspread the world, under the name of Christianity, which had neither God for its Author, nor the welfare of mankind for its end: who were debased by what was sent to purify them, and deceived by what was ordained to deliver them from error.

If these facts have been forgotten, as they seem to have been forgotten, by the tendency of certain writings which have been lately pressed upon our attention, it is high time that they be brought back to our remembrance. But if I endeavour to stir up your minds by this men-

tion of them, it is not because I believe that such admonition is needed here, or that you have ceased to make the ruin of man by sin, and his restoration through the sacrifice of the cross, the cardinal point of all your teaching. God forbid you ever should, and so close the door against your own ministerial usefulness! There are many other subjects of instruction; but all must proceed from this as from a centre. Many duties are to be performed; and that they may be performed, must be inculcated: but they must be so inculcated, that the great principle of salvation by grace may be preserved in all its integrity and consistency. It is necessary to "keep under the body, and bring it into subjection," by abstinence, and mortification, by whatever means experience has shown to be profitable. Still, for what purpose? Not that we may atone for the offences of the body by the maceration of the body, but because "this is the will of God, even our sanctification." It is necessary to cultivate humility, to practise charity, to exercise piety: not, however, that we may be hereby justified, but because we are justified: for "if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his," not justified at all.

Ingenious men may find much to urge against this simple truth. They who have studied religion in the closet rather than in the world, or who know more of other history than of the history of the human heart, may think that we are thus leaving the narrow gate too widely open, and making the road to heaven too smooth. So it has been from the beginning. The apostles were accused of encouraging sin, by proclaiming the abundance of divine grace. The Jews were jealous that Christians should enjoy immunity from a burthen which they themselves had borne, and escape the ordinances of the law of Moses. And the adversaries of the christian faith made it one pretence of their opposition, that it offered the divine favour to the profligate and malefactor. But they to whom the truth was committed, did not meet these imputations by denying that "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin." They did not escape from a false accusation by a reserve of the truth which was assailed. They did not confound the propitiation which atones, with the sanctification which that propitiation works on the believer's heart. So far from it, we find Paul on this matter speaking with a vehemence

unusual to him. “ If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.”*

And surely we find here, as we might expect to find, that “ God destroys the wisdom of the wise, and brings to nothing the understanding of the prudent.” For whilst learned men are elaborately proving that outward rites and services are the only means of holiness on which we can depend, that “ bodily exercise ” and “ voluntary humiliation ” † are the proper mode in which the sinner may approach his God, the plain preacher of the Gospel is confuting them, not by words, but by faith, and the honest disciple is showing that “ they who have believed in Christ will be careful to maintain good works.” In religion, as in other things, many a truth which the philosopher passes by, is picked up by the simple and unlearned ; whilst many a theory in which the philosopher prides himself is contradicted by ordinary observation. And thus, in the present question, experience proves that the only doctrine which conveys real comfort to the soul, is the only doctrine

* Gal. i. 9.

† See 1 Tim. iv. 8. Col. ii. 18.

which produces the genuine spirit of christian piety. Experience proves, that the more we labour to establish ourselves in the practice of holiness, the more need we find of clothing ourselves in the righteousness of our Redeemer. And again, the more firmly we trust to that righteousness which is not our own, the nearer we advance towards the personal righteousness which we are striving to attain, and cannot be satisfied without attaining.

II. The other error to which I purpose to allude, is no less injurious to the Saviour's glory. Practically he is treated with dishonour, when the Church which he has established is made to usurp his place, to perform his acts, to receive his homage : is so represented as to be, virtually, the author of salvation, instead of the channel through which salvation flows. This is, in truth, to depose him from his throne, and to invest his subjects with the authority which belongs to himself alone.*

It is convenient, no doubt, in language, to embody the multitude who believe in Christ

* Appendix No. III.

under one comprehensive term : and our Lord has himself taught us by example that we may do this safely and legitimately.* But language may mislead. We may personify a body, for the convenience of discourse, and by degrees forget that a community is not a person. And it is still worse, if the body which was first personified, comes afterwards to be deified. Yet a process of this kind has gone on with regard to the christian Church. When Jesus declared that he would build his Church upon a rock, and that the gates of hell should not prevail against it, he simply declared that there should hereafter ever be a body of men believing in Him as the Son of God—a body which Satan might assail, but should never succeed in destroying. He did not say that he would set up a power upon earth, which should possess his authority, act in his stead, and as his vicegerent dispense his anger or his favour. We look in vain for a single sentence in which such a purpose is implied : a purpose so important, and, I may add, so extraordinary, that it must have been written in words which none could fail to read. But advantage has been taken of the obscurity

* Matt. xvi. 18.

of language, to maintain and encourage this idea. The Church has been made, first an abstraction, and then a person, and then a Saviour. The Church, thus invested with divinity, has the minister as her visible representative: and he, explaining the prophetic anticipation, has assumed the place of God.* We too well know what corruptions found entrance at this source: what opportunity was given to the exercise of the worst of human passions: what food was supplied to malice, enmity, pride, covetousness, and ambition. So that one of the first and most needful works of the Reformers was to pierce the veil, to divest the Church of the mystery in which it had been shrouded, and to disclose it to the world in its true and scriptural form, as the company of believers.† The Church is that body which had assembled in the upper chamber of Jerusalem, and there received the promise of their risen and ascended Lord.‡

* See 2 Thess. ii. 4.

† Art. xix. "The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men, in which the pure word of God is preached, and the sacraments be duly administered according to Christ's ordinance."

‡ Acts i. 13, 14.

The Church is that party which united together, and “had all things common,” and “continued in the apostles’ fellowship.”* The Church is that “congregation of faithful men,” in all ages and of all countries, who maintain in their purity the doctrines and institutions of the Gospel. The ministers of this Church are those called to serve the united body : to perform the prescribed rites : to teach, to rebuke, to exhort, to warn, to comfort : and to commit perpetually to other faithful men the things which they have themselves received.

Such is the simple analysis of the Church : the Holy Catholic Church, of which Christ is the head, and with which he has engaged to be present by his Spirit unto the end of the world. We must beware of assigning to the members, or to the body which the members compose, a power which really belongs to the Head alone. If we speak of the ark of Christ’s Church, we must remember that we are only speaking metaphorically. That ark is not limited to any special locality on earth, like the ark of Noah ; it extends as far as the knowledge of Christ extends : for

* Acts ii. 42—47.

He is the true ark, prepared of God for the saving of all who commit themselves to Him. The ministrations of the Church are the door by which the community of the faithful on earth is entered : but Christ is the only door by which heaven can be entered ; and many may be admitted into the visible fold, who remain for ever unknown to the true Shepherd. The members of the Church are branches of the vine ; but the Church is not the vine : that name belongs to Christ alone. The Church is “the pillar and ground of the truth :” but the Church is not “the truth :” neither has it life in itself : Christ alone is “the way, the truth, and the life,” through which every individual member of the Church must seek access to God.

Yet all this, undeniable in itself, is practically contradicted, whenever the services and the ordinances and the ministerial office are magnified beyond their due proportions, or placed before the people with the prominence to which they have no claim. Church principles, in their proper sense, all must approve. All must approve of that cordial agreement with the articles, that sincere preference of the services, that willing

conformity to the discipline of the Church, which show that our profession is honest and consistent. This, and nothing else, must be the meaning of the phrase, unless it is intended to avow that the Church is to assume the place of the Church's head, and to be revered, served, and trusted instead of Him. No one will deny our right to maintain Church principles, in preference to the principles of the Presbyterian or Independent. But, on the other hand, I must think that to set up, as it were, Church principles in opposition to the principles of the Gospel, and place them in invidious contrast, is alike unreasonable and unscriptural. It is to confound the means of grace with the Author of grace: to worship the thing made, and to dishonour the Maker. It is to array against Christ the instrumentality which he has established against Satan. He appointed his ministers, that there might be a perpetual provision for opposing "the power of darkness," a perpetual provision for carrying into effect, through conviction and conversion and sanctification, his merciful purpose of "bringing many sons to glory." He instituted his sacraments, that they who observed them might be a visible body of witnesses to

him in the world: and that, after the usual manner of the divine operations, there might be known and manifest channels in which his Spirit might flow, to the edification and comfort of believers.

Therefore he ordained the ministry, and he ordained the sacraments, that there might be a Church; a continual "congregation of faithful men." And shall this Church boast itself against its Author, and claim a power which he has never given? Shall the earthly members assume the authority of their heavenly Principal? Such seems to be the case, when they confound church membership with faith: or so magnify the ministrations belonging to their office, as virtually to represent that, except through their instrumentality, there is no salvation.

In addition to the chart of Scripture, which is sufficiently clear and instructive, beacons enough have been raised in former times, warning us how those, who in this respect have wandered from the track, have made shipwreck of their faith, and left an example to future ages. The Jewish nation has shown us what it is to make a

boast of privileges, and ascribe undue importance to outward ordinances: to pride themselves as “the temple of the Lord:” to be satisfied that they were “Hebrews;” that they were “Israelites;” that they were “of the seed of Abraham.” The warning furnished by the Romish Church comes still more nearly home. In their creed, they hold the vital truths of the Gospel. Practically, their dependence is on their Church. To be within that pale, is indispensable to salvation. To receive absolution from the priest is security. He claims a power of sanctifying water to the washing away of sin: he professes to deliver to the communicant what he has made the very body and blood of Christ. He, in short, is in Christ’s stead. We know all that follows; and what we know, might be sufficient to deter us from approaching principles which lead to such confusion of truth and error.

My Reverend Brethren, I combat what I hold to be a mistaken view of the Church and ministry, because I believe it to be mistaken, and not because it is a principle inexpedient to maintain. If the doctrine which I oppose be true, let it be enforced, without reference to expediency or in-

expediency. But certainly if it be not true, we have every reason which prudence and discretion can furnish, to forbid our urging it. Had an enemy devised a plan for marring our usefulness, he could not have formed a scheme more likely to effect his purpose. We have to reclaim a population to the Established Church of the land, which has been in a greater or less degree estranged from it through causes to which I am unwilling to allude, lest I seem unnecessarily to "accuse my nation : " estranged from it through causes for which the present generation is not accountable, and which it is strenuously labouring to remove. Can we admit a doubt concerning the way in which we should approach such a population? Must it not be on the broad principles of the Gospel, proving to every man's conscience his own lost state, and proclaiming the mercy of God in "reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them?" Surely to set before persons, circumstanced as the people of this country have been, the exclusive privileges of the Church, is not the way in which we can expect to draw them within her walls. If they are to be so drawn, the apostles must be our model. These,

whether towards the uninstructed heathen or their bigoted countrymen, exercised with meekness their commission : raised no unnecessary barrier against truths which nature is but too reluctant to receive : even made personal concessions which almost surprise us, if by any means they might gain some. And this one thing they did : they were constant and unwearied in proclaiming that only name under heaven given among men, whereby they may be saved. Let this be our example. Whilst we cannot avoid desiring to bring over to the Church those whom education and former habits have made her enemies, let us show that our first anxiety is that they be converted to religion. So our good will not be evil spoken of, nor that zeal ascribed to party spirit and private interest which really springs from honest and just conviction.

I am sure that my Reverend Brethren will judge me candidly in this matter. Whilst I should especially regret that obstacles were needlessly interposed, when through God's blessing so much has been accomplished towards rendering our Church available to all its purposes, I must not be suspected of disparaging her minis-

ters, or undervaluing their sacred call. How could I, knowing, as I must know, the disinterested exertions, the self-imposed duties, the self-denying labours, which prove of so many around me their "election of God" to the office which they bear? How could I think lightly of a ministry which I see made instrumental to the highest purposes of divine mercy: which I see employed to tame the savage, to enlighten the blind, to civilize the desert, to fertilize the wilderness: which I see able, through the grace given to it, to reclaim the profligate, to make the simple wise, to comfort the mourner, to strengthen the weak-hearted: to send light into the darkest recesses of indigence, to expel Satan from his strongest holds of wickedness? What can I do but admire the man, who, animated with no other feeling than zeal for God's glory, and compassion for his fellow-men, goes forth with the Bible in his hand to meet the contradiction of the infidel and the sneers of the lover of this world: pursuing the service of his Lord, not among "green pastures, or beside the waters of comfort," but amid scenes of wretchedness and degradation to which only christian love could carry him? We can-

not but honour those whom God delights to honour.

And so, again, we love and revere our Church : for we believe, nay, know her to be “ founded upon the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone.” We believe that God has appointed her to great and peculiar distinction. There are other congregations of Christians which profess the same truths : we honour them also with brotherly feelings ; and gladly say, “ Grace be with all them that love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.” But the commanding position of the English nation attaches especial importance to the Church of the English nation. And we rejoice and are thankful that it has pleased God to distinguish her as a witness to himself in all lands : we are thankful that the Reformed Church of which most is known in foreign countries, is a Church which has most strictly adhered to primitive doctrine and discipline, and most nearly assimilates, both in the articles of her creed and the order of her ministers, to Scripture itself, and to what may be proved from Scripture. Let us be content with these advantages, and let all boast-

ing be excluded. It is no sign of greatness to vaunt of authority. In the sight of man, as well as God, he that humbles himself is more likely to be exalted than he who boasts of himself beyond his measure, and assumes an authority which could never be entrusted to successive generations of men, unless, like the apostles, they were enabled to read the heart.* But though none can forgive sins, save God only : though regeneration is not of the will or of the work of man, but of God, whose Spirit bloweth where it listeth ;—there is much allotted to us which we may justly prize as a talent, and esteem as an office, if rather its infinite importance may not give us cause to tremble at the possession. It is much to sit in the apostles' seat, and hold the office which they held. We, like them, are “ambassadors for God :” our calling is like theirs : we entreat men, for Christ's sake, to be reconciled unto God. We are stewards of his mysteries : we are overseers and shepherds of his flock. And as successful ambassadors ; as faithful stewards ; as diligent overseers ; as watchful shepherds ; if the Holy Spirit working with us enable us so to prove, we shall need no

* See Mr. Benson's Five Discourses : Disc. i. and ii.

higher honour, we shall want no greater dignity. And as in no other way can we attain to real dignity; so in no other way can we secure to ourselves the authority to which we are entitled. We could not, in this land of light, maintain the fatal claims which the Romish priests assume, and which nothing except the darkness in which they shroud their people could enable them to preserve. We pity them, whether deceivers or deceived: God forbid that we should either imitate or envy them.

But if we so tend the charge committed to us, that they grow and flourish as the flock of the true Shepherd; they will not fail to esteem us, at least as much as it is good for frail and fallible men to be esteemed. We shall have to the full as much honour as we can bear. The greatest joy of an apostle is, when his "children walk in the truth." And the surest sign of an apostle is, that in which St. Paul took comfort, "the work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope," which his disciples exercised, which resulted from his ministry, and proved that God was with him. To "turn many to righteousness;" that is real pre-eminence. To "win

souls" to Christ; that is lasting honour. 'To "take heed to ourselves and to the doctrine;" that is both "to save ourselves, and them that hear us." To preach the word, to be instant in season and out of season, to testify, both publicly and from house to house, repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ;—this is to be the successor of the apostles. To be "gentle unto all men; apt to teach; patient; in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves:" this is to be a "man of God." And in the great day, when many who have been first may be last, they who have most faithfully laboured to turn men from darkness to light, from the power of Satan unto God: they will have the surest rejoicing, and wear the brightest crown.

A P P E N D I X.

No. I.—Page 11.

It may be interesting to the clergy of the diocese, and to those who take a concern in its religious welfare, if I subjoin here a list of the new churches, under the head of the several parishes in which they have been built.

CHESHIRE.		
Parish.	Church.	Sittings.
Astbury.	Buglawton . . .	476
Bebington.	Tranmere . . .	500
	* Rock Ferry . . .	500
Birkenhead.	Woodside . . .	850
Bromborough	(rebuilt) . . .	400
Budworth, Gt.	Stockton Heath . . .	450
Bunbury.	Tilston . . .	400
Chester.	St. Bride's (rebuilt) . . .	750
	Boughton . . .	900
	Christ church . . .	600

* Not yet consecrated.

Parish.	Church.	Sittings.
Cheadle.	Handforth . . .	200
Congleton.	* St. Stephens . . .	815
Coddington.	(Rebuilt) . . .	320
Davenham.	* Wharton . . .	400
	* Rudheath . . .	200
Evodsham.	Norley . . .	340
Grappenhall.	Latchford (rebuilt) . . .	1,400
Hanmer.	Bronnington . . .	250
Macclesfield.	St. George's, Sutton . . .	1,500
	* St. James's, Sutton . . .	500
	Hurdsfield . . .	850
Malpas.	Bickerton . . .	280
Mottram.	Newton . . .	817
	Staley . . .	1,004
	Tintwistle . . .	970
Nantwich.	Leighton . . .	200
Prestbury.	Bollington . . .	970
Pulford.	(Rebuilt) . . .	300
Runcorn.	Trinity . . .	800
Rostherne.	Marthall . . .	220
Sandbach.	* Wheelock . . .	350
Stockport.	Dukinfield . . .	1,200
	Compsall Bridge . . .	600
	Hyde . . .	1,600
	Norbury (rebuilt) . . .	1,005
Tarvin.	Duddon . . .	200
Wallasey.	Liscard . . .	1,200
West Kirkby.	Hoylake . . .	350
Wybunbury.	Donnington . . .	200
	Weston . . .	180

LANCASHIRE.

Parish.	Church.	Sittings.
Ashton-under-Line	Stayley Bridge (rebuilt)	1,250
Blackburn.	St. Paul's . . .	800
	Over Darwen . . .	1,520
	Lower Darwen . . .	760
	Bamber Bridge . . .	750
	Feniscowles . . .	500
	Tockholes (rebuilt) . . .	860
	Witton . . .	700
	Mellor . . .	950
Bolton-le-moors.	Harwood . . .	500
	Turton . . .	1,060
	Walmesley . . .	648
	Emmanuel . . .	700
Bury.	*St. Paul's . . .	1,600
	Walmersley . . .	677
	St. James's, Heywood . . .	1,100
Cartmel.	Lindale (rebuilt) . . .	160
Childwall.	Haiewood . . .	370
	Aigburth . . .	450
Croston.	Bretherton . . .	400
	Maudeslay . . .	400
Deane.	Horwich (rebuilt) . . .	1,500
	Halliwell . . .	470
Eccles.	Pendlebury . . .	600
	Pendleton (rebuilt) . . .	1,500
	Walkden Moor . . .	500
Halsal.	Melling (rebuilt) . . .	400
	Lydiate . . .	400
Hawkeshead.	Brathay . . .	200

Parish.	Church.	Sittings.	
Kirkham.	Freckleton . . .	250	
	Lytham (rebuilt) . . .	700	
Lancaster.	St. Thomas . . .	1,175	
	Skerton . . .	700	
	Quernmoor . . .	200	
	Glasson . . .	200	
	Poulton le Sands (rebuilt)	600	
	Bedford . . .	650	
Leigh.	Whittle-le-Woods . . .	761	
Leyland.	Withnell . . .	756	
Liverpool.	St. Martin's . . .	2,000	
	St. Catherine's . . .	1,100	
	St. Bride's . . .	1,350	
	St. Luke's . . .	1,300	
	St. Mary's . . .	1,000	
	St. Matthias . . .	1,000	
	*St. Saviour's . . .	1,400	
	St. Bartholomew . . .	1,000	
	St. Barnabas . . .	1,000	
	Windsor . . .	1,000	
	Manchester.	Hulme . . .	1,800
		St. Andrews . . .	1,800
		Christ Church, Salford . . .	1,200
St. Saviour's . . .		1,700	
*St. Jude's . . .		1,600	
Harpurley . . .		900	
Openshaw . . .		900	
Broughton . . .		1,200	
Cheetham Hill . . .		1,500	
All Souls . . .		1,400	
Withington . . .		700	

Parish.	Church.	Sittings.
Middleton.	Ainsworth (rebuilt).	300
	Birch	1,000
St. Michaels.	Outrawcliffe	300
North Meols.	Southport	600
	Croscens	280
Ormskirk.	Burscough Bridge	750
Penwortham.	Farington	460
Poulton in Fylde.	Thornton	250
	Fleetwood	450
	Southshore	350
	Prescot.	Rainhill
Prescot.	Eccleston	500
	St. Thomas's in St. Helen's	850
	*Parr (do.)	370
	Preston.	St. James
St. Thomas		1,000
St. Mary's		900
Christchurch		1,000
Ashton		250
Prestwich.	Tonge	600
	Oldham, Greenacres	1,500
Rochdale.	Smallbridge	1,010
	Spotland	1,500
	Todmorden (rebuilt)	1,450
Sephton.	Waterloo	600
Standish.	Adlington	600
Walton.	St. Augustin's, Everton	1,500
	St. Jude's	1,600
	Kirkdale	1,100
	St John Baptist, Toxteth	1,800
	St. Ann's, West Derby	900
	Knotty Ash, West Derby	500

Parish.	Church.	Sittings.
Warrington.	St. Paul's . . .	1,800
	Padgate . . .	450
Whalley.	Accrington . . .	950
	Tunstead in Newchurch	750
	Clayton Moor in Altham	700
	Briercliffe in Burnley .	500
	Habergham Eaves, do. .	1,050
	Worsthorn, do. .	638
	Rawtenstall . . .	765
	Clithero (rebuilt) . .	1,100
	Chatburn in Clithero .	350
	St. James, do. . .	688
	Oswaldtwistle . . .	764
	Fence . . .	410
	Barrowford in Colne .	494
	Christ Church, do. . .	850
*Sabden . . .	500	
Wigan.	Pemberton . . .	1,540
	Haigh . . .	850
	Scholes . . .	1,200
	Abrams . . .	420
Winwick.	Trinity, Ashton . . .	600
	Croft . . .	450
	*Waldgrave . . .	450
Ulverston.	Trinity . . .	1,213

WESTMORLAND AND CUMBERLAND.

Arlecdon.	(Rebuilt) . . .	200
Burton.	Holme . . .	500
Heversham.	Milnthorp . . .	500
	Levens . . .	400

Parish.	Church.	Sittings.
Kendal.	St. Thomas . . .	900
	St. George's . . .	1,400
	Grayrigg (rebuilt) . . .	200
	Selside (do.) . . .	200
	New Hutton (do.) . . .	150
Kirby Lonsdale.	Casterton . . .	500
Lowseswater.	(Rebuilt) . . .	150
Melling.	Wray . . .	220
Warton.	Silverdale (rebuilt) . . .	150
	Yealand . . .	200

This shows an increase of accommodation, in Cheshire, of 25,047 sittings; in Lancashire, of 99,037; in Cumberland and Westmorland, of 5,670.

The recent Census (1841) has raised the population of Lancashire from 1,336,854, to 1,600,431. Supposing the increase in Cheshire to be in the same proportion, viz. about 20 per cent., the population of that county will appear to be raised from 334,391 to 401,269: being an increase in the two counties of 330,455.

It is no small encouragement that we have been able to provide for this vast addition of people, not according to the former average, which did not exceed one seat for every eighth person, but even beyond the proportion which is found to be practically required, viz. one sitting for every third person. On this improved scale, 124,084 sittings will suffice for more than 330,455 additional persons, i. e. for more than the actual increase of Lancashire and Cheshire.

Manifestly, therefore, the circumstances of our church, even in the most unfavourable districts, are greatly im-

proved; without noticing the vast addition of pastoral superintendence, or taking into account the thousands who receive regular instruction in chapels and school-rooms, not included in the foregoing enumeration.

Even in the town of Preston, where the population has increased from 33,112, to 50,073, the proportion of accommodation is not diminished. Preston had, in 1831, five churches, with seat-room for 6,450, or about one-fifth of the population. It has now nine churches, with seat-room for 10,400; and thus maintains the same proportion to the increased number.

Parts of the parish of Stockport still exhibit a grievous deficiency. The churches, however, have far more than kept pace with the increase of population. The population in 1831 was 66,610, with seats for 6,391, or about one in ten and a half. The population in 1841 is ascertained to be 81,171, and the accommodation has been raised to 11,011 sittings, about one in seven and a half.

The parish in which the most effectual exertions have been made to recover the ground which had been lost, is that of Whalley, which includes the large towns of Burnley, Colne, and Clithero. It contained, in 1831, seventeen churches, with seat-room for 13,550, i. e. less than one in seven of a population of 97,868; and though the population in the interim has grown to 112,000, the accommodation now is, notwithstanding, at the rate of more than one in five of the population; fifteen churches having been built, holding 11,367 persons.

On the other hand, the important parishes of Ashton under Lyne, Bolton, Bury, Prestwich, which includes Oldham, 50,513, and Rochdale, have remained in a

great measure stationary. Their population in 1831 amounted to 286,466; their united church-room to 36,654 sittings. That has been since increased by 11,582 sittings, reaching 48,236. But the increased population, at 20 per cent., must be calculated as reaching 343,759, leaving the accommodation nearly as before; viz. less than one seat for each seventh person.

There is every reason to fear that in places such as these the lost ground can never be recovered without public assistance; and that, unless this be granted as a stimulus to local exertions, a vast multitude of our people must still remain without regular spiritual instruction.

We may turn with better encouragement towards Manchester and Liverpool, in both which places contributions have been supplied on so liberal a scale, and Societies for building churches so wisely established, that we may reasonably hope to see the purposes of the establishment fulfilled, and no pretext left for deserting the national Church, through want of adequate provision within its pale.

I cannot quit this subject, without allusion to the attempts which have been lately made (sometimes in a tone which makes it difficult to believe that there is any sympathy with the object) to depreciate these and other modern churches, as devoid of taste and ecclesiastical propriety. On the contrary, it may be justly asserted that the great majority, as buildings, are far superior to the average churches which have come down to us from preceding centuries. They cannot vie with the beautiful spires and spacious chancels of some

of the midland and eastern counties ; and in every part of England, in some of our large parishes, a church is found, which in these altered times we are more able to admire than to imitate. But I assert that on the whole they greatly excel the majority of the older churches, though not yet embosomed in trees, or overhung with ivy. In point of convenience, there is no sort of comparison. Whatever an antiquary may think, a church will be useless for any purposes except his own, which it is impossible to make warmer than the external air, or in which the minister can be neither seen nor heard. Archdeacon Hare, himself no slight admirer of ancient architecture, has placed the subject in its proper light.*

“ Though our new churches are not comparable in grandeur to many of the ancient, yet, when we are taunted with their inferiority, we may allowably plead that the larger ancient churches were the work of many long years, and not seldom of generations, the scantier population of those times finding ample room for their worship in a small portion of the projected building. Whereas in these days our necessities compel us to complete our work as speedily as possible. We had to make amends for the unchristian negligence of a century, during which the increase of population in some parts of our island was beyond all former example. When every part of England is adequately supplied with churches, then we may set about building minsters and cathedrals. Would the pious men of former ages have acted otherwise? Would they have left thousands and hundreds of thousands of souls without a place to worship God, and to hear his word in,

* Notes to Charge to Archdeaconry of Lewes, p. 56.

while they expended their means and energies in erecting grand and gorgeous fabrics, far beyond the needs of the congregations that were to assemble in them? Would there have been any true piety in this? Amid much error, much weakness, much extravagance, we have yet been enabled to lay hold on this one cardinal truth, that our special duty and mission is to preach the gospel to the poor.”

It may serve to show how these churches have been built, and to explain some particulars of their constitution and endowment, if I reprint here a short account of those out of the number, which were consecrated in the year 1839. The churches there described furnish a fair sample of the rest; and the exertions through which they were raised, and the circumstances which made it necessary to raise them, are essentially the same.

On June 21st, 1839, was consecrated a Church at RAINHILL.* The Vicar of Prescot built this Church by subscription, £500 of which was given by Mrs. Sherbourne, and intended it for a Chapel of Ease. The pews were so eagerly taken by the inhabitants, and the Curate found the sphere of labour so interesting, that his father desired to endow the Church under the Act 1, 2, Will. IV. c. 38, and possess the patronage in return. Thus a district has been taken out of the unwieldy parish of Prescot, and 2,000 inhabitants, to whom before it was impossible to give regular spiritual super-

* Rainhill is a township in the parish of Prescot, containing nearly 2,000 inhabitants, and three miles from the Parish Church.

intendence, have a Church within their reach, and the constant ministrations of a Clergyman residing amongst them.

One is at a loss to know on what principle any jealousy could have been entertained, as was at first entertained, on the subject of the Act of Parliament which authorises the endowing a Church under such circumstances. Granted, that the Patron and the Incumbent have a vested interest in the Parishes within which the Church is raised. What can it be except clear gain to the Patron and Incumbent of Prescott for all future time, that the Vicar should have 2,000 or 3,000 fewer persons under his charge? The present Vicar has the satisfaction of knowing that by the zealous exertions through which he endeavoured to provide for this unmanageable portion of the immense flock committed to him, he has been the means of relieving himself and his successors from a burthen which must always have been too heavy for them.

The Church is plain and unpretending, with seats for 400. It cost £850.

On the same day was consecrated a Church at HALEWOOD, as a Chapel of Ease to Childwall, or rather to Woolton in the parish of Childwall, also available to the district called Tarbock in Huyton parish. This Church is built with such successful exercise of architectural taste, that, like its predecessor in the same neighbourhood, the Church built last year by Mr. Taylor at Eccleston, it may be recommended as a model to those who have a similar design in view. The cost was £900, with seats originally for 250; but it has been already

necessary to increase them to 370, and there is still a demand for room.

The Vicar of Childwall has settled £15 from the tithes on this Chapel. The Earl of Derby grants an annuity of £20.* The rest of the minister's income is supplied by the pew-rents, and a surplus of subscription.

Another call to this neighbourhood was occasioned in October by the consecration of the New Church (ST. THOMAS'S) at St. Helen's, built at the sole expense of P. Greenall, Esq. Its construction is ornamental, and somewhat singular, being a cross, with a gallery in each transept, and an organ gallery in the front. The whole roof is arched, without pillars. The Communion-table and pulpit are especially well contrived, and the position of the minister is very favourable both to himself and the congregation.

A school, in character with the Church, is already in operation, and a Parsonage-house is in progress. The Church, which holds 850, cost £3,200; but the whole expense of endowment, School, and Parsonage, must exceed £6,000. A noble example of wise employment of fortune. And not the first which has been shown by the same family, as is testified by the Church at Wilderspool.

The congregation attending on this occasion showed

* Of the subscription, amounting to £1,304, the Vicar of Huyton and his family furnished £300, and the Incumbent of Woolton £150, and the Communion plate.

So great is the desire of accommodation, that 230 sittings are let at an average of 10s.

their sense of the liberal example set them, by a contribution of £ 254.

Two years ago, St. Helen's, with a population far exceeding 15,000, had only a single Church. The Church was capacious, and the clergyman indefatigable. Still it was impossible to meet the wants of such a population. The licensed Chapel at Parr has been since opened on the outskirts of the town, where a Curate's salary is supplied by the Pastoral Aid Society. St. Thomas's, with its Minister, provides for another district. Four clergymen unite their labours: and four thousand persons may be accommodated in the three churches now existing in the town. Still a body of many hundred well-dressed men, who marched with us in procession to the Church, but were unable to follow beyond the doors, remained to show that the system which has been so liberally begun must be followed up by further exertions in this rapidly increasing neighbourhood.

It is, however, a matter of thankfulness to know that the last two years have witnessed the erection of five new churches,* and the settlement of five additional clergymen, within a diameter of five miles. These five churches contain, at every season of public worship, 2,500 persons: of which number not a fifth, we may confidently affirm, had any opportunity before of attending the Established Church.

The next duty was at EMMANUEL Church, Bolton. The origin of this church gives it peculiar interest. Two years ago a general anxiety was felt among the

* Parr and St. Thomas, in St. Helen's, Ecclestone, Rainhill, and Halewood.

inhabitants of Bolton to show some token of respect and gratitude to their Vicar, who for more than twenty years had laboured amongst them with indefatigable zeal, and with diligence truly disinterested. They raised a large subscription, which was to be laid out in a service of plate, and furnish a memorial to Mr. Slade's family hereafter of the esteem in which he had been held. The Vicar heard of their purpose, and saw at once that an opportunity was now given, which he had long desired, of increasing the Church accommodation in the vast town under his charge. He begged to divert the honour intended for himself, and devote it to the glory of God: and now the Church of Emmanuel, Bolton, will remain for ages a monument of his disinterestedness, as well as of the grateful feelings of a flock towards the shepherd who has long "ruled them prudently with all his power."

The church contains 700: is handsomely built, with a well-proportioned tower; cost £2,200.

From Bolton we proceeded to ADLINGTON, a part of the extensive parish of Standish, three miles from the church, and containing 2,000 inhabitants. Here we find a church built with great economy: holding within a small area six hundred persons, by means of front and side galleries. This mode of building, though not ornamental, is very popular: such a church is easily warmed, and all are within easy reach of the clergyman. The church has been inconveniently crowded from the time of its first opening: and every pew is taken.

The church cost £1,560. Her Majesty's Commissioners furnished £400. The Chester Diocesan So-

ciety £300. The late Sir Robert Clayton £500. The rest was obtained by subscription. Sir Robert Clayton also gave £100 for a bell and other requisities; £200 towards a school-room; and £500 towards endowment.

On the following day ST. THOMAS'S Church, at Preston, was consecrated; being the fourth church* built by the † present Vicar within the last four years, by means of funds which he has been the sole agent in raising, amounting in the whole (together with the endowments) to more than £20,000. The expense of this Church was furnished from the fund called Hyndman's Trust. The late Miss Hyndman left her fortune, more than £60,000, for the purpose of building Churches. Owing to some informality in the will, it might have been set aside. But her brother, on whom the fortune would have devolved, refused to take the advantage which the law gave him, and carried his sister's design into full effect. When "the world shall have passed away, and the lust thereof;" when all that an ample fortune could have provided shall have lost its value, if value it ever had: the blessings which have been thus produced will remain, and that approval duly appreciated which the Most High has recorded for our encouragement, "That

* One at the village of Ashton, three miles from Preston. In the town, Christ Church, St. Mary's, and St. Thomas. Besides which, a Chapel originally built by some Dissenters, has been purchased, and makes a very useful place of worship for 900 persons.

These Churches are no less ornamental to the town, than they are valuable for higher reasons. They display great architectural taste and knowledge, and are in imitation of the pure Norman style.

† Unhappily it must now be said, 1841, "the late lamented Vicar."

it was in thine heart to build an house for my name, it is well that it was in thine heart."

Each of these new churches provide for different districts of the town of Preston, and have an average of 5,000 persons attached to them. But how great is the effort which is required, and the resolution which must be exercised, in order to give any adequate supply of pastoral superintendence to a population so rapidly increasing! And yet the consequence is certain, if such exertions are neglected. The population, then left to itself, must either grow up without any sense of religion, or receive whatever instruction it enjoys from those who are opposed to the Established Church in practice and in principle. Now they are attached to the Establishment by ties least of all likely to be broken: by the regular superintendence of one appointed to watch over them; by daily acts of kindness and assistance; by the education of their children; by the spiritual benefits arising from domestic and public instruction.

If these things had been attended to earlier, the present generation might have witnessed a very different state of religion throughout the land. Let us be thankful for the spirit which has now, though late, been roused.

The village of HOLME consists of 1,000 persons, two miles distant from their Parish Church of Burton in Westmoreland. Here a Chapel of Ease was consecrated on the last day of September; being built by subscription, and a grant of £200 from the Incorporated Society. The ground was given, and a liberal portion of the

funds was contributed, by the Honourable Col. and Mrs. Howard, who, at a cost of £7,000, have also built and endowed a church on their own estate at Levens, and have largely aided the many other good works which have been undertaken in their neighbourhood.

Holme Church is built on the plan of that at Casterton, as described by the Rev. W. Carus Wilson in his useful publication, entitled "Hints for Building Churches." He was scarcely credited, in asserting that "a church like that at Casterton could be built for £750." Here the plan is repeated for the same money. An oblong building, surmounted by a tower; having a deep front gallery; and not more remarkable for its cheapness than its neat appearance, and convenient accommodation for 500 persons.

Mention of Casterton, reminds me of the Clergy Daughters' School established there; in which, and in the nursery attached to it at Silverdale, 140 daughters of the poorer clergy receive an education which would be valuable for any station in life, and enjoy advantages which the richest of our land might be happy to secure for their children. Without believing that all our sense of beauty has its basis in utility, we cannot but acknowledge that the effect is unusually gratifying, when natural and moral beauty is found in association. Casterton affords an example of all that is picturesque, as well as of all that is useful. A group of buildings, designed and employed for the highest purposes, is sheltered by surrounding hills, and surrounded by spreading trees: and pleasure-grounds, beautiful in themselves, are ornamented by parties of happy children, who are

here allowed to take their occasional recreation. The owner of these grounds, Carus Wilson, Esq., has for more than forty years been a zealous promoter of every object which could contribute to the glory of God, or the welfare of man. And now, in the decline of life, he has seen raised on his estate a memorial which will perpetuate the name and the benevolence of his family through future generations.

Mr. W. Wilson has also in operation another establishment, where a hundred orphan or otherwise destitute children are received and educated, and prepared under the best instruction to fill the office of domestic servants, or country school-mistresses, at the annual payment of £10 per head. They are here brought up in Christian principles, their morals closely watched over, their characters formed; and doubtless, in numerous instances, the destitution which once seemed a grievous calamity, has been overruled, by directing them to this refuge, to their temporal and eternal blessing.

These Schools have already set the example of several others on a like plan. One for the daughters of clergymen, has been established at Bristol; another at Brighton by the Rev. Henry Elliot; and a fourth is now proposed for Yorkshire.

What a different scene our country would present, if these examples of benevolence were more common! There will always be orphan children; deserted children; children from some cause or other left destitute. These poor young creatures, left without natural protection, are too often seized upon by abandoned persons, and before they can either know the nature or consequences of sin, are plunged into the depths of vice and misery. If

christian charity were as quick-sighted as selfish interest, if the good were as active in well-doing as the wicked in evil-doing, these might be preserved from ruin, and the community, instead of being injured by their profligacy, might be profited by their industry. And of such charity, beyond all others, may it be affirmed that "it is twice blessed;" blessed no less "to him that gives, than to him that takes." The superintendence of such plans is an object of delightful interest, occupying hours which would otherwise be vacant: suggesting also thoughts of comfortable reflection, if the mind, looking towards futurity, finds need of some proofs of faithful stewardship, and is led to inquire what "foundation has been laid up in store against the time to come."

Such, if she were not too humble to entertain them, might justly have been the reflections of the late Mrs. Richardson of Kendal. It would be ungrateful to leave this district and this subject, without mention of her name: for she was indeed a faithful stewardess: "faithful over a few things:" not rich, in the usual sense of the word, but certainly rich towards God: for instead of increasing her establishment, or surrounding herself with superfluous luxuries, she gave to His glory what many might have supposed that her own comfort and station required. It was said of a patriot of old, that instead of children, he left two victories to his country. This lady left two Churches; neither of them, indeed, built solely by her means, but neither of which could have been raised so early, or completed so satisfactorily, without her ample contributions, amounting to several thousand pounds. She was rewarded, before she died,

by the gratification of seeing a regular congregation of nearly a thousand persons added to the establishment at KENDAL, without any diminution of attendance at the parish Church. And MILNTHORPE, where 1,300 persons had been collected together as a flock without either fold or shepherd, is now possessed of its due ecclesiastical provision: its Church, its Parochial School, its Parsonage-house, its Clergyman.

We now proceed to Clitheroe. In the preceding year a Church had been constructed at Chatburn, a village of that parish two miles from the town. The opening of a School-room for evening service some years ago had been welcomed by the inhabitants with unexpected satisfaction: now the school-room serves its proper purpose, and the beautiful village church receives its congregation, in the midst of which their settled minister resides.

This year the advantage of another church and Clergyman is given to Clitheroe itself. It contains about 700 on a large area; and by the erection of galleries, as the population increases, will easily accommodate 1,200. The Diocesan Society may be said to have erected this Church: having given £800 in a direct grant, and having indirectly contributed £300 towards the endowment, by causing the erection of a Church at Oswaldtwistle. The late Mr. Halstead resided there: and when he saw the rising Church, and anticipated in his mind the blessings which might follow, he endowed it with £2,000, and afterwards bequeathed a portion of his estate, which eventually produced £4,600, towards the endowment of other new Churches which might be

built in the parish of Whalley. Of this sum, ST. JAMES'S, Clitheroe, shares £300.

In the district assigned to this Church, 1080 of the people were found to be Dissenters, 650 Churchmen. Had not timely measures been taken, such would have been the case in all our populous towns: and no reflecting person can be doubtful as to the ultimate result. It has pleased God to awaken us, and by a view of the consequences, though through his mercy a distant view, to show us the danger of conniving at spiritual destitution.

The change cannot be illustrated by an example more striking than is furnished by the parish of which Clitheroe is a part, the vast parish of Whalley. It extends over 108,140 acres; the population being at the last census 97,868. To this population, in 1834, there were 20 Clergymen: viz. 17 Incumbents of the different chapelries, and 3 assistant Curates. There are now 43: viz. 26 Incumbents, and 17 Curates. Since September 1835, nine new Churches have been opened, and one enlarged: giving an addition of 6,268 sittings, by an expenditure of £27,000.* Five more Churches are in progress, the sum raised for which exceeds £18,000. And £5,200 are offered as a beginning for four more.

During the same period, viz. since the year 1834, the sum of £7,192 13s. 1d. has been expended in the erection of 22 School-rooms: and £2,336 is raised towards building 14 others.†

* One of these, Habergham Eaves, in Burnley, was built by Her Majesty's Commissioners. A small endowment has been added by subscription.

† £3,333 had been expended on ten others between the years 1830-1834.

Within a period, therefore, not exceeding five years, there will have been added to the means of religious instruction, in this single parish of Whalley, twenty-seven Clergymen, fourteen Churches, and thirty-six Schools.*

That this should be recorded, is due not less to the liberality which has contributed to this large expenditure, than to the indefatigable personal exertions by which that liberality has been called into action, and conducted to such a successful end. Providentially, also, the "Pastoral Aid" and "Curates' Fund" Societies were instituted at the precise moment when the local exertions were requiring such extensive aid. Out of the seventeen Incumbents who in 1835 superintended the parish of Whalley, the annual income of 16 averaged £141. Such incomes left no surplus for Curates. Of the Clergy since appointed, nine receive the greater part of their salaries from the Pastoral Aid Society, and two from the Curates' Fund.

For many preceding years there had been a duty to perform at Blackburn, where, as at Preston, the Vicar has made strenuous exertions to meet the wants of his increasing parish by proportionate church accommodation.† Consequently, Preston and Blackburn are, per-

* I was furnished with the exact particulars of these Churches and Schools by the Rev. J. Rushton, whose industry and experience have greatly contributed to many of them. It ought to be mentioned that the Parliamentary Grants gave valuable assistance towards building the different Schools.

† The Churches at Mellor, Over Darwen, Lower Darwen, St. Paul's, Tockholes, Bamber Bridge, Feniscowles, and Witton, in Blackburn parish, have all been consecrated within the last ten years; and two Chapels

haps, the only towns of any size in Lancashire where there is seat-room for one in five of the population. There is still, however, great occasion for another Church at Blackburn, on the north-eastern side, and the foundation is already laid. The approach to the principal entrance will be through a quadrangle flanked with Schools in character with the architecture of the Church: and when the proposed plan is completed, Blackburn will possess two of the finest Churches in the kingdom.

Passing on, therefore, this year, through Blackburn, we proceeded to WALMSLY, in the parish of Bolton, three miles to the north of the town. We left behind the old Chapel, with seats for 128 persons, and came to the beautiful building now substituted for it, from a design by Mr. Sharpe, and mainly completed through the exertions of Mr Haworth. It contains 650, without a front gallery, which is in contemplation, and might easily be added. The cost £2,600: the whole of which was raised by local subscriptions, except £350 from the Incorporated, and £300 from the Diocesan Society. Schools in character, and a Parsonage-house, are in the course of erection; towards which £113 was collected on the morning of the consecration, and the following Sunday raised the sum to £200.

The amount may seem large, in comparison with the seat-room, which this Church, and some others which I am to mention presently, have cost. But the additional or ornamental expense has been furnished by

formerly occupied by Dissenters, have been converted to the use of the Church.

private munificence; the Societies, when they have given at all, have only given according to the accommodation: and we cannot be surprised if the inhabitants of a flourishing neighbourhood, whose own houses are built with every attention to comfort and even luxury, should be unwilling to dedicate to God "that which cost them nothing." Such was David's feeling, when he reflected within himself, "Behold, I dwell in a house of cedar: but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains." And the contrary disposition is severely censured by the Prophet: "Is it time for you to dwell in your ceiled houses, and this house (the house of God) lie waste?"

There seemed great danger, some years ago, that this reproof would apply to England. Privately and individually we have begun to wipe off the reproach: and perhaps, before it is too late, the nation at large may be moved to say, "With the help of our God we will arise and build."

We next proceeded to TONGE, a township in the extensive parish of Prestwich, but in locality more nearly allied to Middleton, with a population of at least 2,000 entirely destitute of ecclesiastical superintendence. Towards this Church Her Majesty's Commissioners granted £1,200; to which a local subscription of £700 was added. The accommodation is for 500: and the parishioners welcome the boon which has been bestowed on them, and are likely to secure the residence of their Clergyman by the erection of a Parsonage.

BROUGHTON Church came next, in a different neighbourhood, and a different style of architecture. It is

built in the oblong form, with side aisles and galleries and a clerestory, very successful in its proportions and the position of its pillars. The accommodation is for 1,200.

Broughton, as well as CHEETHAM HILL, where a Church was consecrated on the following day, is covered by the villas of residents whose business lies in Manchester, from which they are distant about two miles. Hitherto they have been forced to resort with their families to the churches of Manchester:* they have now obviated this inconvenience, and provided for themselves and their neighbours at home, taking advantage of the Act 1, 2, Will. IV.† And this has been done in a manner suitable to the object. The Church at Broughton was built for £5,600, the valuable site being given by Rev. Mr. Clowes of Broughton Hall: but the whole expense has reached several thousands more, towards which the same benevolent individual has been a principal contributor. So has Mr. Lloyd to the Church at Cheetham Hill, which is one of the handsomest structures of modern times, the site being given by Lord Derby. The tower and spire, perfect in their

* The original Chapel at Cheetham Hill had become insufficient for the increasing numbers.

† Objections have been raised against the patronage of Trustees, but without sufficient consideration. According to the rules of our Establishment, a Clergyman once appointed to a Church, is independent of the Trustees who nominated him, as completely as if he had been selected by the Bishop or the Lord Chancellor. There is therefore no disadvantage on this ground. And local subscribers are apt to think that there is less probability of a partial or injudicious appointment, when three, or four, or five persons are to concur, than if the nomination rests with a single individual.

proportions, are imitated from the Church of Louth in Lincolnshire. The cost has exceeded £13,000. But the effect is answerable to the expenditure. The accommodation is ample for 1,500, and it is worth remarking that both these Churches, though comparatively so large, are extremely favourable to the voice, and require less exertion than many others which do not contain half the number of persons. I suspect that the low flat roof which is commonly adopted in modern Churches is very objectionable; and the oblong buildings, without aisles or galleries, have uniformly an unpleasant echo. This point, as well as the ventilation, ought to be properly considered in the first construction of the plan. They are very important concerns in the usefulness of Churches. Whoever contemplates the building of a Church, would act wisely in determining to copy an existing model, according to the size and expenditure intended. He is more likely to escape disappointment by following experience than by making an experiment. And examples of every kind, of what is to be imitated and what is to be avoided, may be easily discovered in every neighbourhood.

The next summons was to OPENSHAW, a district containing about 4,000, two miles east of Manchester. Here a Church has been built at an expense of £4,500, the whole of which, except a subscription of about £700, was furnished by the Manchester and Eccles Church Building Society. Like the two last mentioned, it has side aisles with galleries and a clerestory.

This district is entirely occupied with factories and print-works. The service was attended by a crowd of

operatives, to whom a holiday had been given by their employers, and whose interest in the Church is equally gratifying and encouraging. A handsome School adjoining to the Church has been built at the sole expense of Mr. Nedin, and we had the pleasure of seeing it filled by three hundred scholars.

I might justly mention among churches deserving of imitation the one which came next in order, ST. PAUL'S at STALEY. It seats 1,004, and cost less than £4,000. Both the tower and body of the church, interior and exterior, without the ostentation of ornament, have all the ornament that can be desired.

The site of this church, which is spacious and of considerable value, was given by Lord Stamford, who also liberally assisted the subscription, amounting to £4,000. The £1,000 endowment was granted by the Diocesan Society. It was gratifying to see many persons at the opening service, who probably never had been in a church before; and to know that many have taken pews who were supposed to hold doctrines very unlike those of the Church of England. A convincing proof was afforded by a collection of £204, that the day was hailed by many present as an earnest of better times.

Passing on to NEWTON, we see the new church now rising at Staley Bridge, instead of the old and insufficient one; and another at Dukinfield, which has been so long anxiously desired. These will be ready for their congregations in the course of the ensuing summer. And greatly are they needed. For the enlarged Church at

Staley is the first addition made to the accommodation of the Establishment within a space of two miles and a half from its site since the year 1773. In the mean while the population enclosed in that space has increased to at least 40,000, and fourteen Dissenters' meeting-houses of various denominations have been built during the last 16 years alone, four of which cost, each of them, £4,500.

It is grievous to record such things. But it is better that they should be acknowledged and amended, than concealed and rued.

Newton is a township of the large parish of Mottram, formerly a pastoral district, now increased by manufactures to a population of 20,000. The township of Newton alone contains 8,000, totally unconcerned with their parish Church. The whole cost here was furnished by public contribution; viz. Her Majesty's Commissioners £1,000, The Incorporated Society £500, The Diocesan Society £600. The Church has therefore been built with strict attention to economy, and, like that at Adlington, has galleries on three sides. It contains 820. And there appeared, on this occasion, every reason to anticipate that the Establishment, though hitherto a stranger, would be gladly received at Newton.

Mottram parish has now four Churches,* instead of one: Newton, Staley, and Tintwistle having been added since 1837. Virtually it may be said to have become four parishes, though the secular boundaries and ancient rights remain unaltered.

* Leaving out of account the small ancient chapel at Woodhead, in the remote north-eastern corner.

Probably there is no district in England, even including the Metropolis, in which the Church has so much still to do, as in that which is passed between Staley and Stockport. The road winds through a continued forest of streets for nine miles, and we meet with a single church in existence: that of Hyde.

Macclesfield is in a more improving state. Ten years ago there were two Churches and two Clergy for that town. Now there are four Churches and seven Clergy: for three of whom we have to thank the Curates' Fund and Pastoral Aid Societies. The fourth Church, consecrated October 10, is in the district of Hurdsfield. It is placed in a commanding situation, and is a handsome structure; the arrangement within being peculiar: no centre aisle, but with side aisles, and three rows of pews parallel with the side-walls, and facing the centre. Including the galleries, there is ample space for 900. Hyndman's Trust furnished £2,000 for the endowment; The Diocesan Society £759: the remainder being made up by subscription.

MARTHAL CHAPEL, consecrated the last in order, is of a very different character, being solely intended for a portion of the wide parish of Rostherne; and, with the exception of £100 from the Cheshire Rural Chapel Society, built and endowed at the sole expense of Wilbraham Egerton, Esq., whose tenants will derive the principal benefit of the building. It is one of fourteen of a like description, holding from 200 to 400 persons, some with and some without endowment, which have been lately added to the Church in the agricultural dis-

tricts of Cheshire: and bear testimony alike to the zeal of the Incumbents, who have taken the responsibility of so much fresh service, and to the liberality of the land-proprietors and residents, who have provided the means for these useful buildings.

The result of this year's exertions, on the whole, is an addition to the preceding Church accommodation of about 13,000 sittings: while pastoral superintendence has been brought within the reach of more than 50,000 persons, to the vast majority of whom it was before practically inaccessible. The cost of the buildings has been £53,300; of the endowments £11,500. Towards the whole sum £18,350 was derived from what may be termed public sources, though all, with the exception of £2,700, originating in private benevolence: viz. Incorporated Society, £900. Her Majesty's Commissioners, £2,700. Diocesan Society, £3,550. Manchester and Eccles Church Building Society, £4,700.* Hyndman's Trust, £6,500.† The remaining £46,500 has been contributed by individuals locally or benevolently induced to provide the means of public worship and pastoral care for themselves and those around them and connected with them. It seems a large sum, because we are not accustomed to look upon such objects as a part of our expenditure. And yet how small is the amount, in real fact, compared with the expenditure of the two millions of people resident in the Diocese of Chester! How little would be added to the outlay when an acre of ground is covered

* Viz. the whole Church at Openshaw, except about £700 subscription.

† The whole expense of St. Thomas's, Preston, except £370 for the site, and the Endowment of Hurdsfield £2,000.

with buildings, if, at the same time, provision were made that those who are to be employed in the manufactory, or on the surrounding estate, should be treated as immortal beings! How little would be diminished from the annual returns of the business, or added to the annual expense of the establishment, if a hundred pounds or two were devoted to the maintenance of a Clergyman who should watch over the eternal interests of those on whom our own temporal interests depend! Indeed, it may be justly questioned whether, even in a temporal point of view, a better return would not have been made for capital, if places of worship had been built, and religious instruction provided, with a fraction of those sums which during the last few years have been expended in adding factory to factory, and machinery to machinery, with little consideration of that intellectual machine which is to endure for ever, but which has been too often treated as if it were to perish together with the material things on which it is employed.

Still we are thankful for what God has already put within our power, whether it be reckoned much or little. And by his blessing we will proceed in the same career, "pressing onward to that which is before;" and think nothing achieved, till in practice, as well as in theory, every individual of our population has a church which it is possible for him to attend, and a Minister who shall know and care for him.

No. II.—p. 20.

Contrary to my original intention, I find myself constrained to add a few words on the general subject, by the terms of Dr. Pusey's recent letter to Dr. Jelf. He speaks of the perplexity which might occur "if any of our bishops should advert to Tract 90, and, without explaining their own views, seem to countenance its condemnation."* There are many, he says, "by whom the slightest word of their bishop would be deeply felt, and who would be at a loss to decide whether they could continue to serve in a diocese in which their views of the Articles, on subscribing which they have been admitted to their cure, seemed to have been censured." This, and more to the same purpose which follows, renders it necessary to state briefly the opinions which I entertain on this matter of subscribing.

I consider that the Articles do contain "a system of faith:" that system, according to which those who subscribe them, are bound to regulate the tenor of their ministerial instructions.

That any could hold a different opinion, I should never have conceived, if I had not read the following sentences. "There has been a recent tendency to set up the Reformers—as the founders of a system of faith, and the authorized expositors of our belief.† This is the real point at issue. Men must lean upon some authority: they cannot guide themselves.‡ The only real question is, from whom we shall learn the meaning of the Scriptures, whether from ancients or moderns.§

* Letter, p. 3.

† Ib. 73.

‡ Ib. 141.

§ Ib. 145.

It will not, then, I conceive, be generally objected to any of us as a grave error, that we hold that the Articles are to be interpreted *according to the teaching of the Church Catholic.*"

If I rightly apprehend the argument here, a clergyman may preach or teach what manifestly contradicts the "true, usual, literal meaning"* of the Articles, if he thinks he can support his doctrine by the *teaching of the Church Catholic.*

This obliges me to say, that I understand the Articles subscribed officially before me, as articles, not of the Universal Church of Christ, but of the United Church of England and Ireland, of which the subscriber is a member. They do not, therefore, admit of interpretation borrowed from any remote or undefined authority, professing to be that of a church calling itself, or imagined to be, the Church Catholic. But they "contain the true doctrine of the Church of England agreeable to God's word" And we "receive them on the authority of our immediate mother." We cannot consistently evade that obligation, by appealing to the authority of "the Jerusalem from above, who is the" common "mother of us all."†

Lest, therefore, silence should be misconstrued, I think it needful to say that in my judgment a clergyman would be departing from the sense of the Articles to which he subscribes, if he were to speak of THE CHURCH as "a life-giving ordinance of divine appointment, one vast sacrament;"‡ and not as "a congregation of faithful men."—Art. xix.

* Prefatory Declaration to the Articles. † See Letter, p. 12.

‡ British Critic, No. LIX., p. 26.

To speak of the Romish Church as *having erred* in matters of faith, so as to imply that it is no longer in error.*—Art. xix.

To speak of Œcumenical Councils as infallible, because the term used in Art. xxi. is not *Œcumenical*, but *general*.†

To speak of Confirmation, Penance, Orders, Matrimony, or extreme unction, as *in any sense* to be “counted sacraments of the Gospel.”‡—Art. xxv.

To speak of “the consecrated elements as *not* remaining simply what they were before, and what to sight they seem.”§—Art. xxviii.

To speak of the celebration of the Lord’s supper, as a propitiatory sacrifice offered by the priest.—Art. xxxi. “An offering for the quick and the dead for the remission of sin.”||

To speak of Purgatory, Pardon, Adoration of images or relics, Invocation of Saints, as only “*condemned according to the Romish doctrine* on these points,” and otherwise admissible.—Art. xxii.¶

To speak of Justification by faith, as if baptism and newness of heart concurred towards our justification: or as if “a number of means go to effect it.”—Art. xi.**

To speak of “Forgiveness, or works of mercy,” as “availing to obtain remission of sins from God.”—Art. xii. xiii. ††

It does certainly require an elaborate system of argument, such as is attempted in the writings referred to,

* Dr. Pusey to Dr. Jelf, p. 22. † Ib. 24. Tract 90, p. 21.

‡ Ib. 32. Tract. p. 43. § Ib. p. 44. || Ib. 60. Tract 63.

¶ Tract, p. 25.

** Tract 90, p. 13. Letter, 141,

†† Tract, p. 16. Letter, p. 145.

in order to prove that persons holding the opinions here excepted against, are consistent members of the Church of England.

No. III.—p. 30.

Many, I doubt not, through fear of schism, and a sense of the evils which attend it, have been led to countenance what they consider to be the cause of Church authority, without being aware of the consequences which follow when that authority is unduly raised: how the Church, rather than the Church's Head, is looked up to as the source of spiritual life or religious power: how incorporation with the body of the Church, is identified with incorporation with the Saviour's body; as if to be in the Church, and to "be in Christ Jesus," were the same.

Now the Scripture, whether using the language of invitation or of promise, uniformly addresses us as individuals. Individuals needing deliverance are addressed by an individual Saviour. The Church, in its character of witness, or messenger, or steward, is the medium through which the offer is made, but not through which the benefit is received. The benefit comes not through the Church, but through faith, individual faith; and men have their religious life by virtue of union with Christ, faith being the instrument of that union. The language of Scripture agrees with this view and no other.

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Can we write instead, Come into *the Church*, and *the Church* shall give you rest?

"I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man

cometh unto the Father but by me." Shall we substitute *the Church Catholic* for the individual Saviour?

"All that the Father giveth unto me, shall come unto me: and him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out." Shall we write instead, Him that cometh into *the Church, the Church* will in no wise cast out? Can we be justified in thus altering the terms of Scripture in a matter of such importance as everlasting salvation? Invited to approach God on an individual footing, as believers in the Son whom he hath sent, shall we seek out another door of approach for ourselves, and come to Him, not as believers in Christ, but as members of a body?

"Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may winnow you as wheat: but *I have prayed for thee*, that thy faith fail not." Could Simon suppose that *the Church* was to be the source of his spiritual life, and not the Saviour?

"*I know* my sheep, and am known of mine." Can we be content to leave the care, the power, the omniscience of the Saviour, to derive from the Church a portion of its life? And will the testimony of the Church, that *she* knows her own, avail us "in the great day?" Is there no danger of the awful sentence, "*I never knew you?*"

"He came unto his own, and his own received him not: but to as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God: who were born, not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." Could any one suppose from these words that our religious life was to be derived to us by *virtue of incorporation with the Church*? Can we affirm it, without presuming to set aside the words of God himself?

The texts which I have quoted are some among multitudes of plain declarations, in which God proposes to establish relation with us on the footing of faith, individual faith, in his Son Jesus Christ. If his purpose were changed, and he designed to set up a visible institution, like the Christian Church, as the medium of man's communication with him, he surely would have revealed this to us in clear and intelligible terms. Scripture contains nothing of the kind. So difficult has it proved to confirm such an idea from Scripture, that the commission of Christ to his apostles has been forced into the service, and made to bear the whole burthen. "Go ye, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." * I am with you, and with those after you who shall be ordained to the like office, to proclaim the redemption which I have wrought, and gather men into one body, having "one Lord, one faith, one baptism." "And lo, I am with you alway:" to support, and guide, and strengthen you; to give an answer to your prayers, to give life to your words. "For without me ye can do nothing." A blessed promise; independently of which there could be little hope to the apostles originally, and little hope now either for ministers or for their people: but certainly *no substitution* of person; *no delegation* of authority: "I am with you alway." Not, Ye are in my stead alway.

How, then, can we venture, with such plain declarations on the one hand, and with nothing, literally

* Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. Some other texts, as the promise to Simon Peter, &c, alleged by the Romish Church, are so entirely irrelevant, that only a *Romish* disputant can urge them.

nothing, except a vague inference on the other—how can we venture to interpose the Church instead of Christ, as the mediator between God and man ; or affirm that “ Christ has appointed the Church as the only way unto eternal life ?” *

I examine the word of God, and there I find all its promises annexed to individual faith. Can I venture to turn aside from this, and claim the promises as a member of the Church ?

Especially when the danger of such doctrines, when generally propounded, is neither slight nor doubtful. They have been again introduced, and maintained, and disseminated, in defiance of all the lessons of experience, and all the warnings of example. Doubtless there are excellent persons who are out of the reach of such danger, and may even imagine that a high doctrine concerning the Church would have the opposite effect from obstructing our contemplation of the Redeemer : would bring men more palpably near to Christ, and greatly promote their sacred and vital union with him. But it cannot do so, if the doctrine be not true and scriptural. And, practically, it never has done so. It has done the very contrary. The majority of mankind will take occasion from such doctrines to satisfy themselves with the external relation, and substitute it for individual faith : as the annals of the Jewish and the Roman Catholic Churches too fatally demonstrate. Such is, in fact, the natural bias, which needs to be constantly opposed.

What, then, is the Church, if it is not “ a life-giving ordinance ;” a “ sacrament” in which the mysteries of

* Tract 46, p. 12.

eternal life are contained and communicated? * in the hands of whose rulers the ordinances of life are deposited?

What the Church is, and what the Church is not, may perhaps be made clearer by changing for a moment the light in which the object is viewed.

An offended sovereign sends a message to his people: proposes terms of reconciliation: and engages, that whoever shall swear allegiance to a certain commander, and remain faithful to him, shall receive indemnity for what is past, and be possessed of peculiar privileges for life. A multitude come in; accept the terms, and swear allegiance: pass through the prescribed form: such, for example, as christian baptism. These are united, enrolled together; and formed into a regiment. It becomes the favoured regiment, the peculiar, the chosen, the royal regiment.

Such is the Church of Christ. The promise is, "He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved." Many trust the promise, cleave to him, and are baptized. And these are collected in a company, called by his name, and entitled to many blessed privileges, of guidance, and superintendence, and spiritual protection. This they enjoy in the present world; and in the world to come, life everlasting.

Here, however, we have a company of persons, receiving privileges, not conferring them. When and how does the change take place, empowering the members of this church, whether its teachers or its scholars, to impart "religious life?" Or where is it implied, that simply to be a member of this church, is to be in possession of spiritual life, or to "have life eternal?"

* British Critic, lix.

The sovereign has made his promises, not to the members of the regiment, but to the faithful adherents of the commander. And we see the important difference. In process of time, the privileges become attractive: and many may enrol themselves in the regiment and comply with the appointed service, who in their hearts intend no fidelity to the commander, and are ready to desert him on the first occasion.

Now, had the promises been made to all who enrolled themselves in the regiment, all would be equally entitled to reward, whether in their hearts they were faithful or not to the commander.

But as the case really stands, the sovereign is under no obligation to any who have not this inward qualification. Some such may have entered into the body, with the usual ceremonies: nay, they may hold the colours, or wear the dress of the truly faithful; but the state of their hearts disqualifies them for any effectual claim.

It is thus between Christ and the Church of Christ. As long as all the company are believers, all is well. To believe, to be baptized, to be in the company, and to be saved, are the same thing. But if, from whatever cause, those become enrolled in the company who bear no fealty towards the head of the company, these have no claim upon him who knows the heart, and who made the faith of the heart a condition of the promised privileges.

So dangerous is that system of religious teaching which places salvation (though it may be only virtually) in the Church; makes the Church the prominent object: and would lead us, in practice, to depend upon a supposed

union with Christ through the Church, instead of on those evidences by which Scripture teaches us to “examine ourselves, whether we be in the faith; to prove our own selves.” We cannot venture to say, Whosoever is in the Church of Christ, is born of God: or substitute this for the apostolical test, “Whatsoever is born of God, overcometh the world.”* It may happen, that all who are *of the Church*, may also be *in Christ*: the members of the company may also be adherents of the commander. But the case may be otherwise: and therefore it must be constantly borne in mind, that salvation is not offered to men because they are baptized, or because they are enlisted in the company: but, as being *faithful* to Him who is the Head of the company, they become entitled to the privileges annexed to *believers, and to none except believers*. Grievous, indeed, is the responsibility,—for fatal are the consequences, of keeping this out of sight: and of inculcating, instead, the religion to which (whatever some may affirm) corrupt human nature is characteristically disposed; the religion which substitutes the visible for the invisible, the external form for the interior principle, the fulfilment of the ordinance for the devotion of the heart. “The prophets prophesy falsely; and the priests bear rule by their means: and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do !in the end thereof?”† The whole system is destructive; equally destructive to the minister and the people. It lulls the people in a fancied security: it elates the minister with a vain superiority. “The leaders of this people cause them to err: and they that are led by them are destroyed.”‡

* See 1 John v. 1—6.

† Jer. v.

‡ Isa. ix. 16.

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